

Canyon Highway—No. 6

Solutions Studied to Slide Problems;

Access to Recreation Areas Planned

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By JOSEPHINE ZIMMERMAN

Snowslides, rock slides, and rock falls all present problems for the proposed freeway in Provo Canyon, all along the route, but particularly in the Upper Falls area.

The new highway route runs high on the hillside opposite Bridal Veil and Upper Falls, passing near the mouths of Lost Creek Canyon, Slide Canyon, and Snow Canyon. The last two are named for the problems they present.

Bert Taylor, preconstruction engineer for the highway

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department, reports he has brought in an avalanche expert to advise the department on possible solutions to the problems.

Four Approaches

There are four ways of preventing slides from covering the highway:

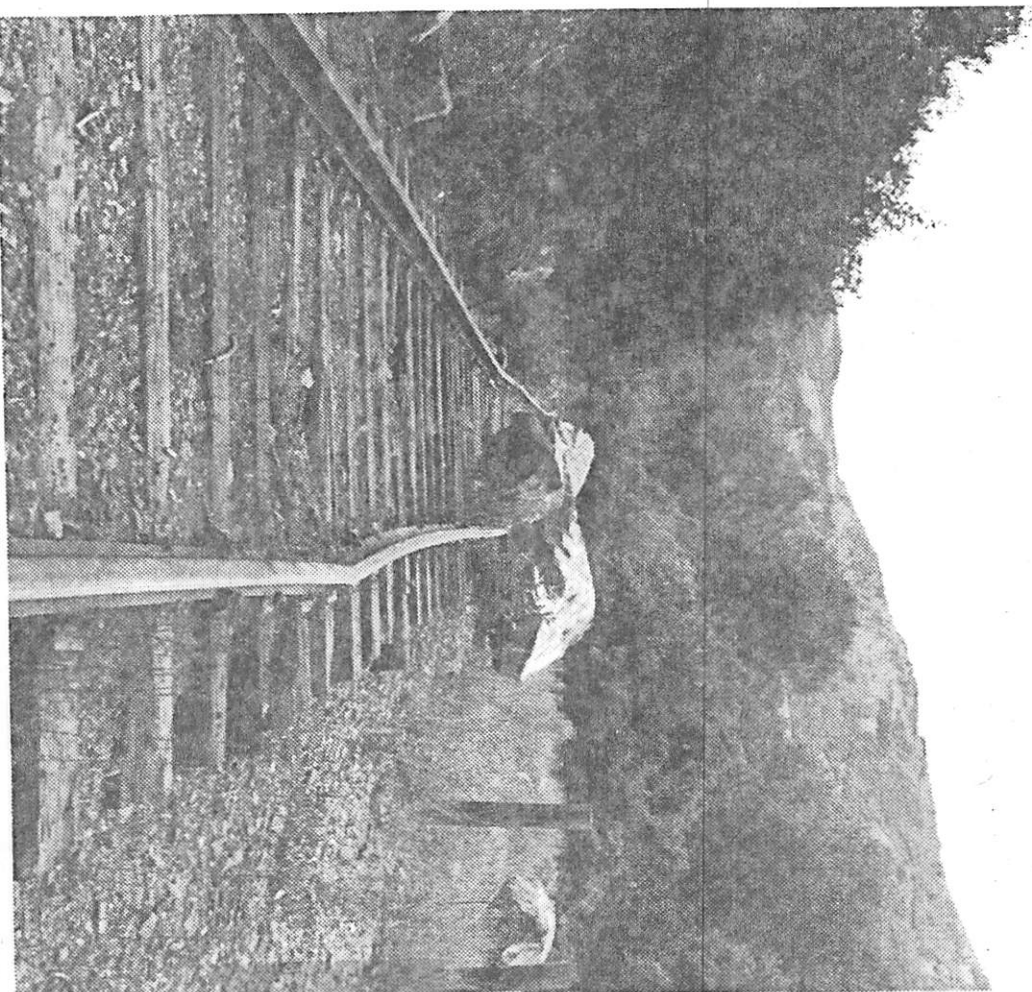
1. Fencing the high ledges to catch avalanches and slides at their source. This would be extremely costly, possibly running into millions of dollars.

2. Constructing large earthenwork barriers at the mouths of the canyons which would divert slides. These are

also expensive and have not proven to be particularly successful elsewhere.

3. Building shelters over the highway in slide areas. This has been done in other areas, but the National Safety Council opposes the practice. The council warns that motorists driving through snow-covered areas will have their eyes adjusted to the bright light, and it is extremely dangerous for them to drive suddenly into a darkened covered area where their eyes cannot adjust to the change quickly.

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ROCK FALLS occur year-around in Provo Canyon. This shot, taken last week on the old railroad right of way below Bridal Veil Falls

shows some of the rocks which have toppled from the cliffs above. The railroad track is bent as a result.

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4. Shooting down the avalanches, as is done at Alta. The highway department has concluded that this is the safest and most practical method of protecting the highway from snowslides.

Traffic Delay

When the avalanche danger is present, it will undoubtedly be necessary to block traffic along the highway while the slides are shot down.

As far as rock falls are concerned, the only apparent solution to the problem is constant patrolling of the highway to remove any rocks which have toppled down from the cliffs.

Many people have asked questions concerning access to the various recreation and residential areas in the canyon. The ways they can be reached are as follows:

Orem Canyon Park—a grade

crossing over the new highway.

Wicks—by way of the present highway, which will become a frontage road.

Spring Dell—Up-canyon traffic will take the frontage road. Down-canyon traffic may exit at Nunns and take the frontage road down to Spring Dell.

Canyon Glen—Up-canyon traffic will take the frontage road. Down-canyon traffic may exit at Nunns and take the frontage road.

Nunns—there will be an exit at Nunns and a road running under the bridge and along the river into the Nunns picnic area.

Rotary Park

Rotary Park — Up-canyon traffic can use the frontage road, and down-canyon traffic, the Nunns exit. However, all traffic will have to travel up past the park on the new frontage road to the point where it joins the present highway below the Bridal Veil Falls parking lot, then cut back down to the entrance.

Bridal Veil Falls — Up-canyon traffic will use the frontage road, and down-canyon traffic may exit at Nunns, then cut back up the canyon. However, the highway department plans to build two parking lots on each side of the freeway, where cars may pull off. A footpath will lead from there down the hill to the Bridal Veil Falls visitor's center.

Upper Falls — Can be reached by the frontage road, with down-canyon traffic exiting at Nunns and cutting back up the canyon.

Vivian Park — An interchange is planned at Vivian Park which will permit exit of traffic both ways. There will be a spur for traffic to the South Fork.

Wildwood — Traffic may exit at Vivian Park and travel up-canyon to the resort.

Sundance and Alpine Loop — The only access will be at the Vivian Park interchange. Down-canyon traffic will exit there and cut back up to the Loop road. Up-canyon traffic will follow the same route.

Since no definite plans for the highway alignment above Vivian Park have been announced, it is not known how access to the other recreation areas higher in the canyon will be made.

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